

Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

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POLICY AND FINANCE

MINUTES

Wednesday 20th November 2019

Present: Deputy Chair Cllr V Letchford, Cllr J Barnes, Cllr G Darrington, Cllr P Darrington, Cllr J Domigan, Cllr C Lee, Cllr J Tuckfield

Also Present: Cllr L Ball, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr J Griffiths, Cllr T Searles

Officers: CEO - Steve Nash
RFO - Steve Innes
Democratic Services Officer - Barbara Playfoot

Public Participation

None

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

10851 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 16th October 2019

APPROVED

10852 TO RECEIVE THE MONTHLY FINANCES

- Cllr V Letchford why there was no income showing from the 1812 event in the Civic Centre figures. The RFO said that the income was now included in the Park's income sheet.
- Cllr V Letchford also asked why there was no income showing for the Fireworks, Christmas Lights and Swanley in Bloom. The RFO said that the invoices were late going out and the income will show in December 2019.
- Cllr J Domigan asked if it was the first time the Oktoberfest had been held and the income was less than the expenditure. The CEO confirmed that it was the first time the event had been held and that it ran over budget by £1400. It is planned to hold it again, lessons have been learned so hoping that it will show profits next year.
- Cllr C Barnes asked why the Consultancy fees were so high. The CEO explained that the fees included survey fees for the Cess pit in the Park along with structural survey for the barn, land survey and design of the planned Rugby club etc. Over the next month or so will be receiving income of £12,500 to offset some of the costs.

- Cllr J Tuckfield assumed that the Alexandra Suites income would increase over the next couple of months. The CEO confirmed that it was the venue's busiest season and ticket sales for all the planned events were selling fast. The RFO explained that the Olympic was now at almost break even compared with this time last year. The CEO agreed that the Olympic finances were much improved.
- Cllr J Tuckfield asked if the Indian festival was a financial success, the RFO confirmed that it was.
- Cllr G Darrington asked why the Bar and Catering Income was down compared to last year. The RFO said that there are planned initiatives waiting to be introduced. The CEO said that he was having to look at staffing before the initiatives could be put into action which it is hoped to encourage residents to use the venue.
- Cllr G Darrington also asked if there was anything being done to increase the conference lettings. The CEO said that he was trying to encourage British Gas to re-hire the venue for conferences but to date has not had the conversation with the appropriate department. The RFO said that the conference lettings were up on last year's figures.
- The CEO explained that he was going to approach the Great Outdoors with a view to buying the franchise so that it would become a Park function.
- Cllr J Barnes asked what the income was received from Reptiles, the CEO explained that it was a fee received from a petting zoo.
- The CEO said that he was meeting with a Parking meter company with a view to installing meters into the Parks Car Parks. Cllr Tuckfield asked would that encourage vandalism. He replied that CCTV could/would be set up alongside the parking scheme.
- The RFO reported that during the last month no payments had been made by cheque.
- The RFO reported that the aged debtors were being chased for their outstanding payments
- Cllr P Darrington queried why Dr Lunt was listed, the RFO explained it was the rental for the Oaks Surgery. The RFO agreed to rename the category to the Oaks.
- Cllr C Barnes felt that the expenditure on the 1812 event seemed very high. The CEO advised that as a council it had previously been agreed that some events would be free to the public, including 1812, Armed Forces Day, Christmas Lights and Bonfire Night which means the council fully funds these events. However it is the CEO's personal opinion that people would be prepared to pay £1 per person for entry into 1812 and Bonfire night which would provide a significant amount of income to off-set these costs. Cllr C Barnes thought this should be looked at and the CEO confirmed he will discuss this with the Leadership Group.

RESOLVED: To accept reports A/B/C/D/E/F/G

10853 BUDGET SETTING 2020 - 2021

The CEO explained that in general the budgets are increased in line with the RPI. The plan is to look at all the income streams e.g. Allotments, etc. and increase them where necessary.

He asked the councillors if they had any new projects that they would like to be included and to feedback information so they can be incorporated into the budget setting. This will be presented to Leadership prior to a Full Council meeting for discussion and ratification.

The RFO added that STC will be asking for a 3% increase in the precept. Cllr Searles asked if there would be an increase in the Olympic flat rent. The CEO confirmed that the rent review was due in January 2020.

10854 APPOINTMENT OF NEW PARK DIRECTOR

The CEO reported that a new Park Director had been appointed and will take up the post from 2nd December 2019. Two new Park managers had been appointed also.

Cllr J Barnes asked that a message of thanks be recorded from all the Councillors to Ryan Hayman the outgoing Park Manager for all his hard work and achievements.

Date of next meeting – 22nd January 2020

MEETING CLOSED AT 20.28

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Steve Nash, on 01322 611663 or snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk